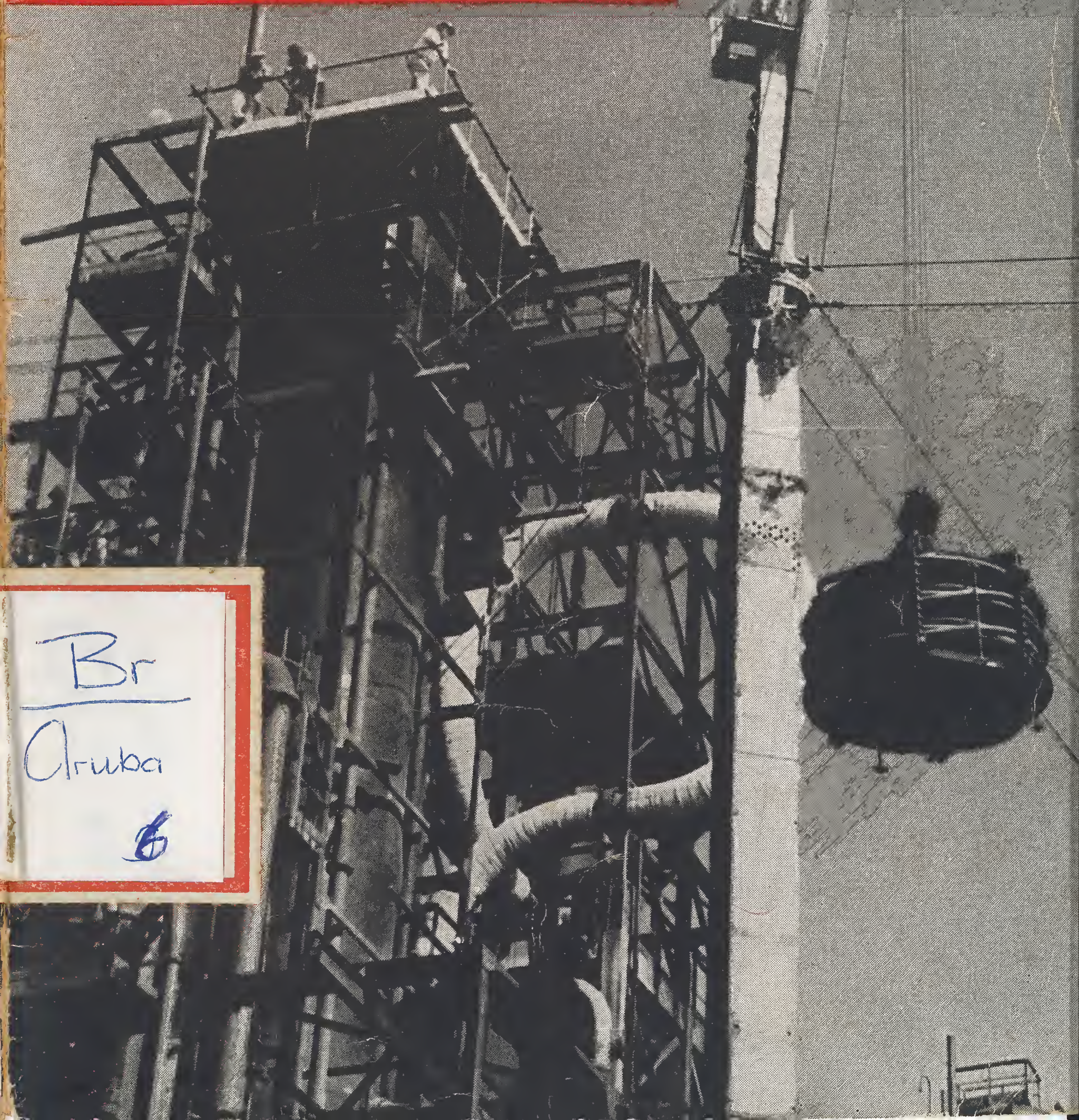


Your  
Job with Lago  
in Aruba



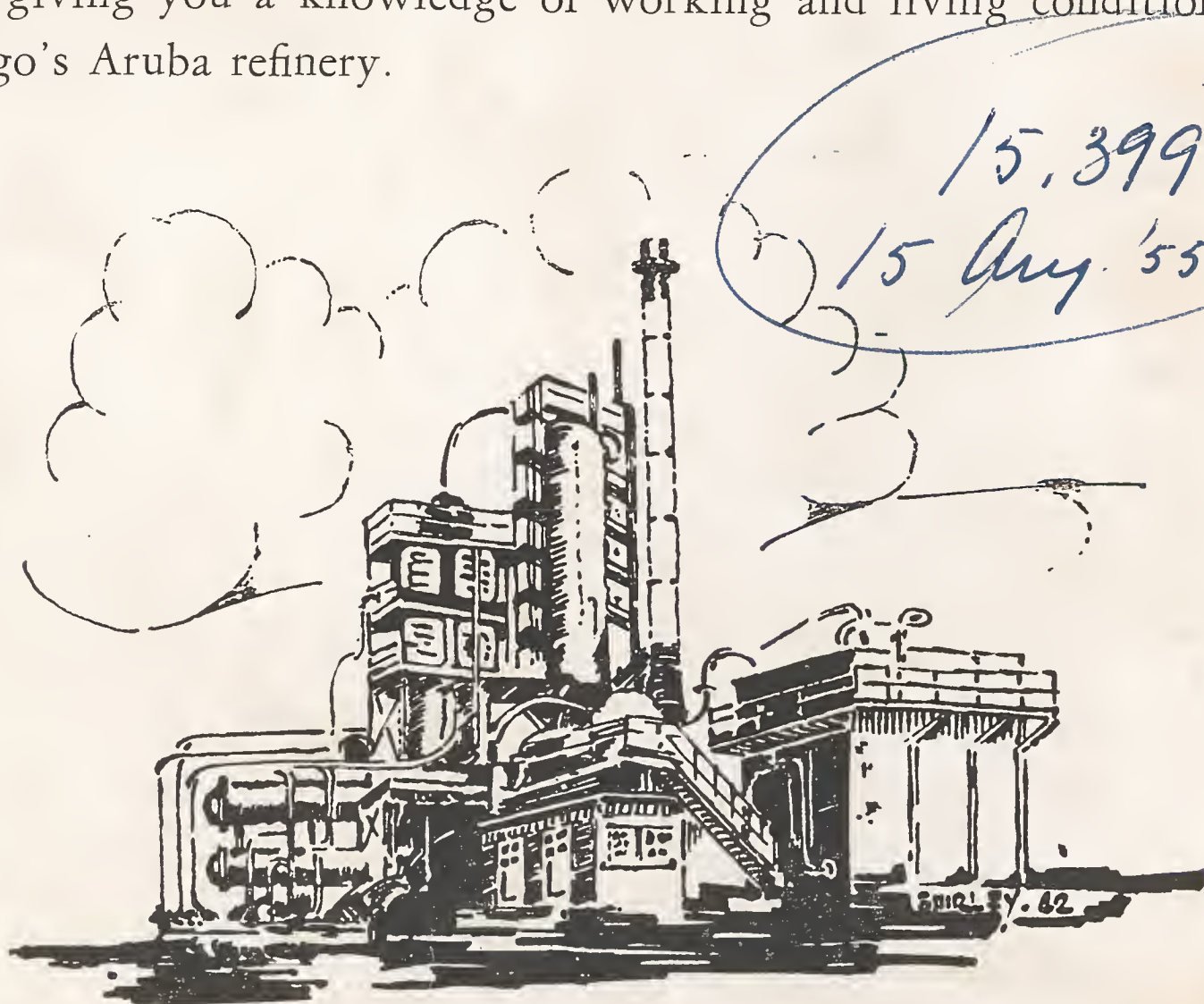
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**W**ITH your acceptance of a job with the Lago Oil & Transport Company, Ltd., for work in Aruba, you have joined what is, in quantity of crude oil processed, the second largest refinery in the world.

Its war record was outstanding: one out of every 16 barrels of oil used by the Allies for the defeat of the Axis powers was run through Lago's stills. It achieved unheard-of speed in construction and production, increasing its output of aviation gasoline a hundred-fold when the need was most desperate. Early in 1942 the refinery sustained direct attack from a German submarine (the first action by the Axis against land in the Western Hemisphere) and for several years the island was under martial law and a condition of total blackout.

Company employees, many of whom have been in Aruba for ten to fifteen years, are proud of the refinery and of their work in it.

While in some respects life in Aruba is similar to that in any small community, you will have many adjustments to make due to living in a small colony of Americans and Europeans on a foreign tropical island. This booklet is designed to help you make those adjustments by giving you a knowledge of working and living conditions at Lago's Aruba refinery.



# Your Job with Lago in Aruba

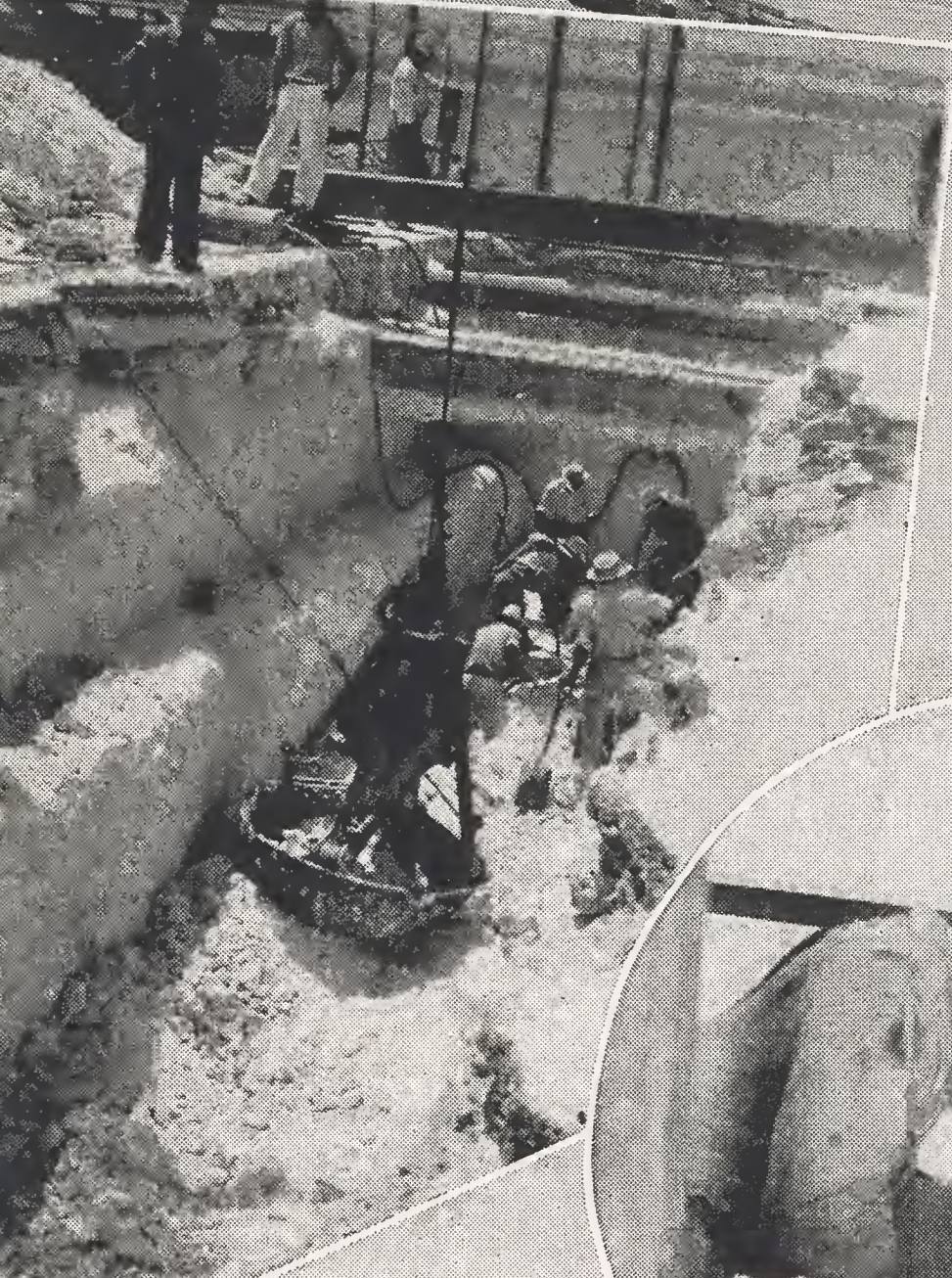


*The Company's Overseas Personnel Department in New York provides all new employees with an official statement of the conditions that govern their employment. Because of changing circumstances, it is possible that portions of this booklet may not be in exact accordance with such employment conditions, or may otherwise become out-of-date in the months following its publication. Therefore it must necessarily be considered as a general picture of working and living conditions in Aruba, and not as a conclusive statement of policies.*

*Bz. N.A. 25*

Published by the  
Lago Oil & Transport Company, Ltd.  
Aruba, Netherlands West Indies

February, 1946



## Your Working Hours

Your working schedule is based upon the type of work you do and the requirements of the operation to which you are assigned. Generally, all shift work is performed on a weekly schedule of 48 hours, with at least one day's rest in seven; and all other work except in a few service operations is performed on a weekly schedule of 45 hours, with Saturday afternoons and Sundays off. Naturally, because of the variety of work that must be done in the refinery and in the community services connected with its operation, it is not always possible to observe these schedules rigidly, but provision is made in such special instances to assure adequate time for recreation and relaxation.

Every effort is made to keep overtime work to a minimum. When it is necessary to work more than 8 hours in any one day or more than 48 hours in any one week, however, employees who are on a regular weekly schedule of hours are paid for such overtime at one and one-half times their normal hourly rate. Employees who are on a 45-hour weekly working schedule are paid at straight time for additional hours worked up to 48 hours, after which the normal overtime policy applies.

Employees in certain supervisory positions are on "continuous responsibility" schedule; i.e., their normal working hours are those of the department or operation to which they are assigned plus such additional time as is necessary for the full performance of their supervisory duties. Where such additional time is a regular or recurring feature of the assignment, the employee's salary is adjusted accordingly but no regular overtime is paid. A small number of supervisory employees are on "limited continuous responsibility" schedule; i.e., their normal working hours are those of the department or operation to which they are assigned plus the time necessary just before and after the normal working hours to "line up" or conclude the day's work. Such employees are paid overtime as outlined above for all other additional time worked.

The normal daily schedule for day workers is from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., with an hour off at noon. Shift workers are on straight 8-hour shifts, which normally rotate from week to week as follows: 8 a.m.—4 p.m.; 4 p.m.—12 midnight; 12 midnight—8 a.m. Time off between shift changes varies from 32 hours off after completing the 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 12 midnight shifts to 56 hours off after completing the 12 midnight to 8 a.m. shift.

## Your Medical Care

### *Hospitalization*

The Company provides a well-staffed and well-equipped hospital for the medical care of its employees, as well as a plant dispensary for minor injuries and emergency cases. Free hospitalization and free medical attention are provided within the limits of the facilities available at Aruba, which are sufficient for all ordinary purposes. When extraordinary treatment is required, necessitating an employee's temporary departure from Aruba, reasonable expenses including round trip travel on the medical leave and living expenses during diagnosis are absorbed by the Company, but not cost of the treatment itself.

*(Note: A fully-accredited American dentist practices in the Colony. His services are not included in allowances to employees.)*

### *Sickness Benefits*

Foreign Staff employees on active status are entitled to sickness benefits to the extent of two weeks at full pay during the first year of credited service; after the completion of one year's service, the allowance is four weeks at full pay, with an additional period of two weeks at half pay. The allowable periods both at full pay and at half pay increase as length of service increases, up to a maximum of 12 weeks at full pay and 40 weeks at half pay, for employees with ten years or more of service.

### *Death Benefits*

*(Note: The following section was prepared on the basis of an announcement of proposed changes in the Overseas Thrift Plan, which is the Company's savings and retirement plan for expatriate employees. The announcement describes the changes as "provisional" and subject to further revision. Please bear this provisional character in mind. Employees will be informed of further changes in the Plan from time to time.)*

The Overseas Thrift Plan as revised January 1, 1946, includes, for participants, two provisions for death benefits: One, a non-contributory benefit provides a death benefit equivalent to three months' to a year's salary depending upon length of service up to five years plus one half a month's salary for each year of service over five. The other provision, which is known as the Employee Supplemental Death Benefits, provides that if an employee wishes, the Company will utilize Company contributions equivalent of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 1% of his salary for the purchase of insurance amounting to 120% yearly earnings. This makes the cost approximately 52c per \$1,000 coverage.

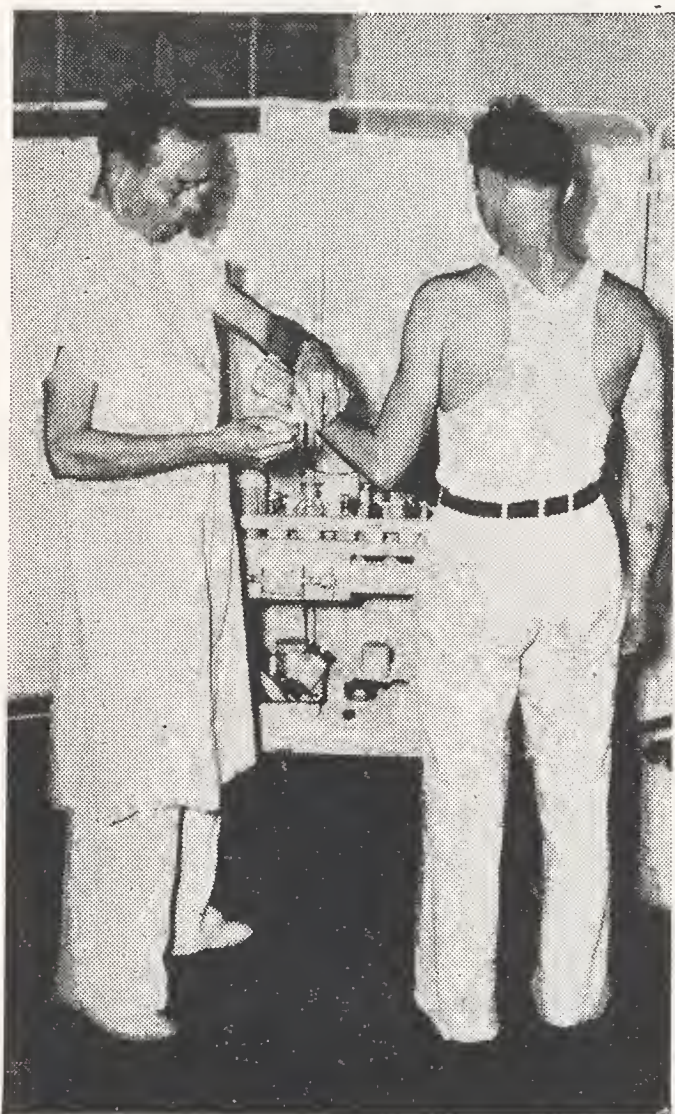
Also included in the Plan are permanent disability benefits.

## If You Have an Accident

The policy followed in cases of industrial accidents is in accordance with the New Jersey Compensation Act. Industrial sickness benefits of full pay are allowed during the first 16 weeks of disability, and two-thirds pay during the succeeding 36 weeks.

## You Will Have Vacations With Pay

Vacations with pay are granted employees at Aruba and are of special importance in affording a change of scene. Because the island



*Free dispensary treatment is available to all employees*

is small and there is a comparatively limited variety of entertainment available, a periodic refreshing of outlook is essential to preserve interest in the job and in daily life.

### *Home Furlough*

Regular home furlough accrues at the rate of 21 days for each year of service, beginning on the date of employment. A furlough is granted only if the employee completes two years at Aruba.

The maximum travel time with pay that is allowed in conjunction with a furlough is the normal time required to return an employee to his "point of origin" by direct route, and the actual furlough does not start until such time as the point of origin would normally be reached. When an

employee wishes to spend his time at a point closer to Aruba than his point of origin, then travel time and overland transportation is allowed only to such closer location. Normal transportation expenses are allowed in addition to travel time pay.

### *Local Vacation*

New employees are eligible for a local vacation of two weeks with pay after they have completed one year of credited service. A local vacation may be taken at any time during a year in which no home



*One of several operating rooms in the Company hospital*

furlough is due. Local vacations (and home furloughs), however, must be taken at a time mutually agreeable to the employee and his department.

Local vacation time cannot be added to a home furlough since the sole purpose of the local vacation is to provide an interlude of rest during a period of employment.

Full pay is granted during local vacations, but no transportation or other expense allowance is made. These vacations are generally taken in Aruba or Curacao, but vacationists may travel by air to such points of interest as Jamaica, Surinam, or various locations in Colombia and Venezuela. The expense of such trips, however, is usually high.

### **Nine Holidays Are Observed**

In determining the holidays to be observed, it was necessary to take into consideration legal requirements, local custom, and the economic needs of the business. The resulting schedule calls for nine holidays during the year: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Liberation Day (May 5, the day on which Holland was freed from German occupation), Ascension Day, Whitmonday, Queen's Birthday (August 31), Christmas, and Boxing Day (day after Christmas). On these days the plant customarily operates on a Sunday schedule.



## You Can Depend on Fair Treatment

A sound foundation for dealing between employees and management is insured by the operation of various advisory committees. These groups represent the employees in adjusting differences with the Company, and advise Management with respect to policies having to do with working or living conditions.

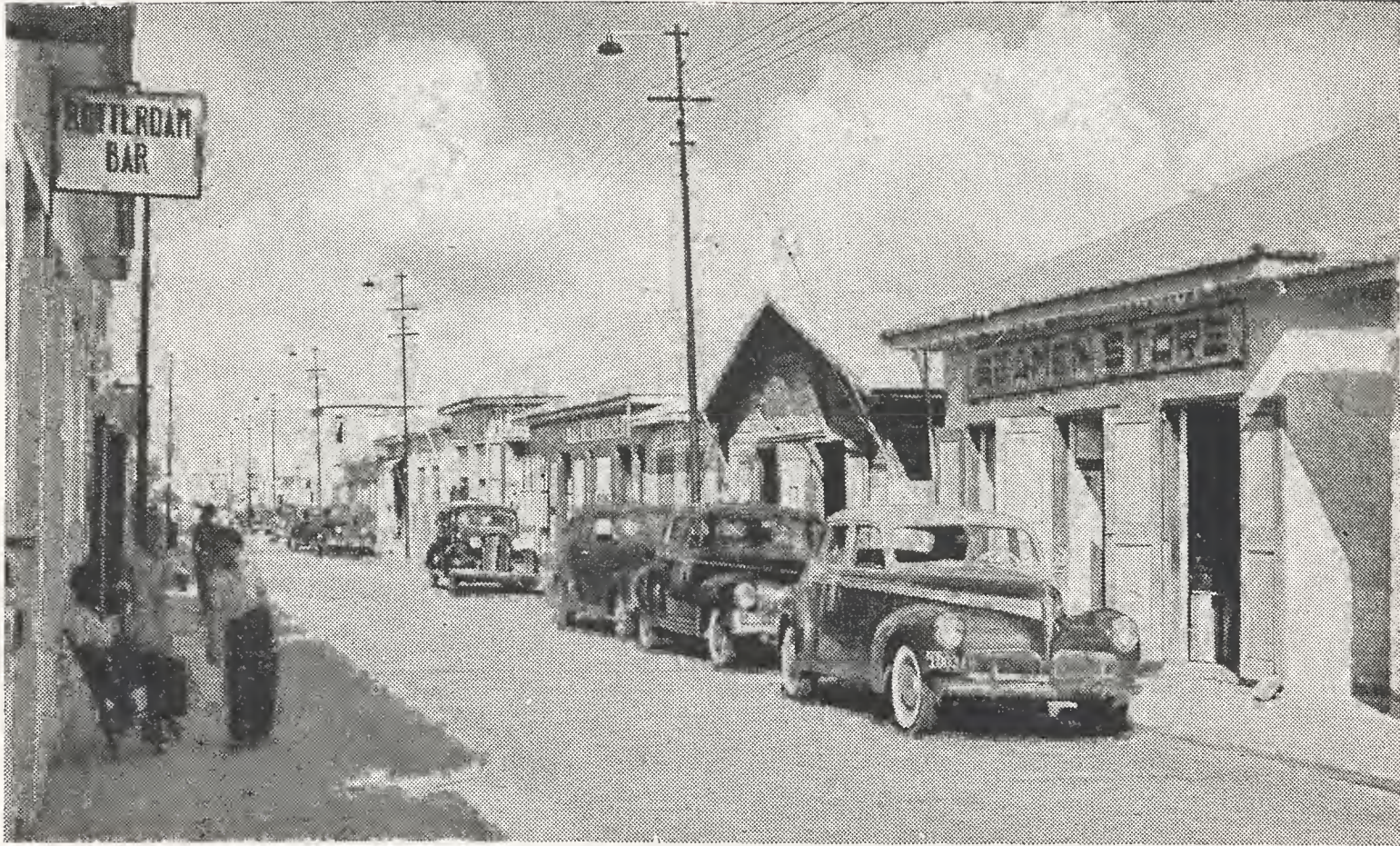
Foremost of the committees authorized to advise on behalf of foreign staff employees is the Foreign Staff Employees Council of 27 men, of whom some are elected from various districts of the plant, and some are appointed by Management from supervisory levels. The F.S.E.C. is authorized to advise on all matters concerning wages, hours, or working conditions. Many of these matters can be solved directly between an employee and his supervisor. If not, however, the employee's councilman may present the problem to the supervisor, to the Personnel Department, or to a meeting of the Council as a whole, which at any time may bring questions to the attention of the Management. The system is flexible enough to accommodate varying circumstances and at the same time insures prompt handling of problems.

The Lago Colony Advisory Committee, composed of persons living in the Colony, represents its constituents on all matters regarding living conditions in the Colony.

Other employee groups not directly connected with working or



*Shown above is a portion of the residential colony, which includes approximately 500 bungalows for employees who have their families at Aruba*



*A street scene in San Nicolas, the small town that adjoins the refinery*

living conditions are the Esso Club Advisory Committee, which organizes athletics and assists in the operation of the Esso Club, and the School Advisory Committee, with similar functions in school matters.

In addition there is a Lago Community Council, a strictly community and non-company group composed essentially of the officers of various community organizations within the Lago residential colony. This group coordinates activities of the various organizations where they concern the Colony as a whole and also administers the funds of the Community Chest.

### **Bond Purchases Are Voluntary**

You may, if you wish, purchase United States Savings Bonds through monthly payroll deductions. An employee authorizes a specific amount to be devoted to this purpose, and the purchases continue on this basis until changed or cancelled by him. (Those making use of the bond purchase plan are urged to specify an amount which will exactly equal the cost of any particular bond they chose, in order to simplify the operation of the plan.) Bonds purchased will be forwarded to any bank of the employee's choosing, or can be held for him by the Federal Reserve Bank in New York.

### **Sending Money "Home"**

Most employees have salary allotments, which are sent from the Company's New York office. After calculating the approximate amount that will be deducted from salary for Commissary and

Club charges, board, room, and laundry charges, cash needed in Aruba, and other deductions, the employee designates a specific amount to be sent each month by allotment check, to a bank or individual, and the amount and payee remain fixed until changed by the employee.

### Saving Is Simplified

*(Note: The following section was prepared on the basis of an announcement of proposed changes in the Overseas Thrift Plan, which is the Company's savings and retirement plan for expatriate employees. The announcement describes the changes as "provisional" and subject to further revision. Please bear this provisional character in mind. Employees will be informed of further changes in the Plan from time to time.)*

The Overseas Thrift Plan, for which all expatriate employees are eligible, is a combination retirement and savings program. Involving *regular* savings, with the Company contributing proportionately to the money contributed by the employee, it provides not only a retirement income, but also a substantial nest egg in cash, part of which the employee may withdraw from time to time.

Employees may contribute 7% of their normal regular earnings toward the purchase of a life annuity payable at age 60 or, discounted, at a younger age. This contribution is supplemented by a Company contribution sufficient to provide a yearly annuity income at age 60 equivalent to 3% of the employee's total career earnings during his participation in the Plan. If an employee makes this 7% annuity contribution, he has the privilege of contributing an additional amount up to 10% which takes the form of cash savings and is supplemented by Company contributions up to a maximum of 3% toward this saving account.

All or part of the cash balance may be used for the purchase of Standard Oil Company (N.J.) capital stock, U.S. Government Securities, individual single-premium type of insurance, and annuity contracts. In addition to cash withdrawals, loans may be made at a low rate of interest, to be repaid by payroll deductions.

*(Normal retirement age is 60 but for each 2½ years of expatriate service an employee may retire one year younger than this normal retirement age, earliest being age 50.)*

When an employee leaves the service of the Company, all money, stocks or bonds from both his and the Company's contributions in the Thrift account are paid to him. A paid-up annuity or cash (at employee option in case of termination prior to age 50) is likewise paid him. Annuity credits are paid proportionate to the employee's length of service at the time of termination, and the portion (if any) of the employee's money not spent for annuities returned in cash.

*(Note: Employees hired on a temporary basis are not eligible for the Overseas Thrift Plan.)*

## **Income Tax Is Paid Locally**

All employees pay income tax to the Curacao Government. Payroll deductions are mandatory, whereby the tax is paid from earnings in twelve monthly installments.

## **Educational Refund Plan**

In addition to the activities of the Training Division, which from time to time offers training courses for the benefit of foreign staff employees, the Company maintains an educational refund plan, for sharing with employees the cost of correspondence courses they may take. To benefit by this plan, an employee must have completed one year's service; the course must be taken with a school approved by the Company; the course of study chosen must be approved by the employee's supervisor and by the Training Division; and the course must be completed with satisfactory grades. In any case where these conditions are fulfilled, the Company will bear 50 per cent of the cost of the course.

## **Your Ideas Are Welcomed**

The Company recognizes the fact that you are in a position to observe and formulate improvements in methods, equipment, processes, and safety conditions. When practical, putting these improvements into practice may be beneficial for you, or the Company, or both. As recognition of the value of the suggestions which are accepted for use, the "Coin Your Ideas" Committee, a Plant group that investigates all ideas turned in, makes cash awards according to the merit of the suggestion. Additional awards can be made for exceptional ideas after they have been in practice for a year, and their benefit in savings or improved conditions has been proven.

As a final step, outstanding awards are submitted each year to the Central "Coin Your Ideas" Committee in New York, which makes annual Capital Awards of \$500, \$300, \$200, and \$100 to the four ideas selected as the best from all divisions of the Standard Oil Company (N.J.).

## **You Are Helped to Work Safely**

The elimination of suffering and reduced efficiency is a cooperative job between employees and the Company. The Management provides technical facilities for protecting employees, maintains an equipment inspection department that periodically checks metal equipment, and maintains a safety department that constantly strives to eliminate actual and potential hazards. All of these, however, in order to be wholly successful, require the conscious effort of every

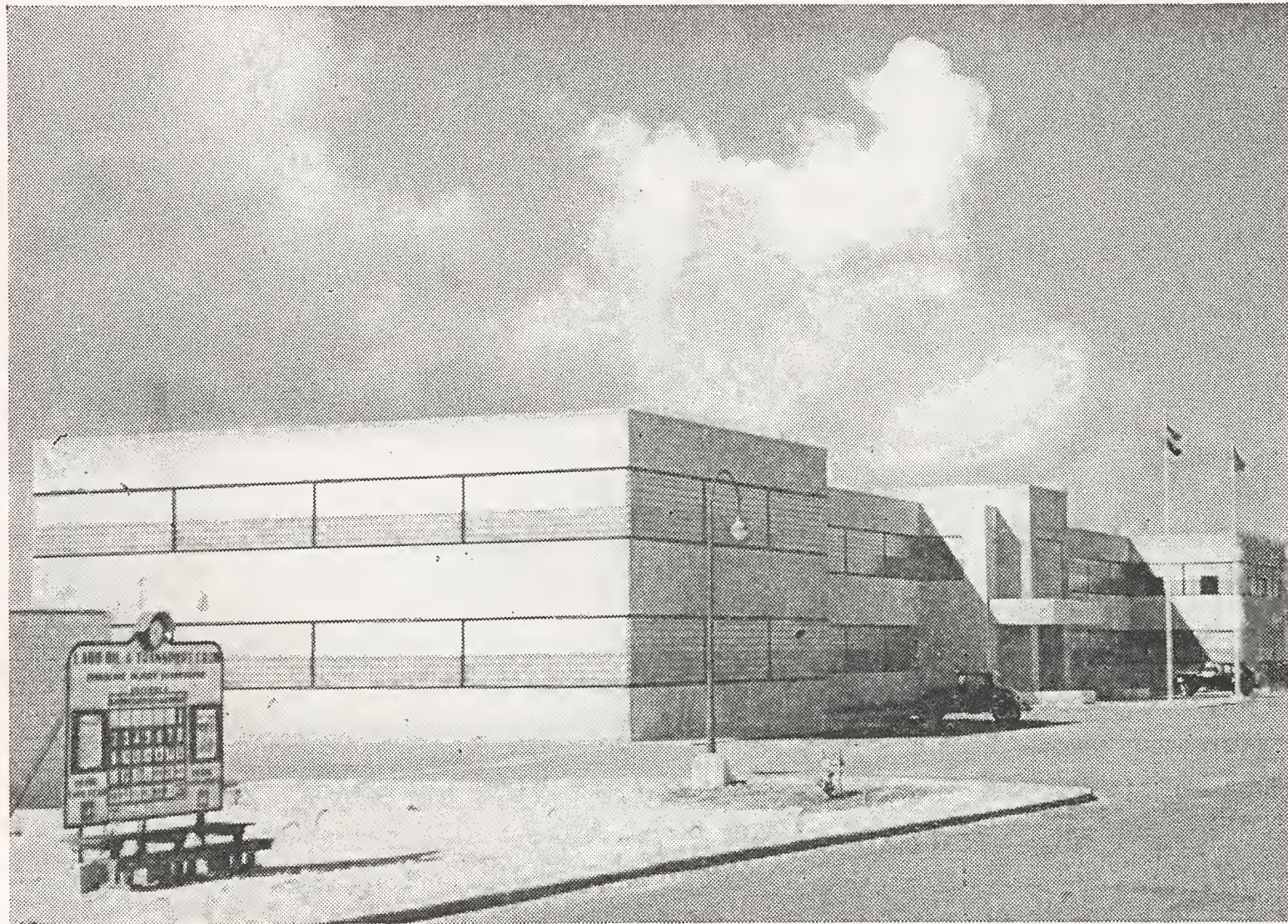
employee to prevent avoidable accidents. Most accidents are avoidable, and most accidents result from a momentary thoughtlessness on the part of a workman. One of the prime characteristics of every first-rate employee is his ability to work safely and to cooperate with the Company in promoting safety for himself and his fellow employee.

### Identification Badges Are Carried

For their own as well as the Company's protection against unauthorized persons entering the Plant, all employees are issued identification badges, which are carried at all times. Company watchmen are stationed at the various gates, and anyone entering the main Company concession, as well as the restricted refinery area, is required to show his badge for their inspection.

### Your Living Quarters

Men employed on a single status are housed in Bachelor Quarters. Each room opens upon a porch, and has cross-ventilation. The rooms are in pairs, with connecting shower-bathrooms. Furnishings include bed, straight chair, metal spring armchair, table, dresser, bookshelves, bedlight, rug, washstand, and mirrored medicine chest. Bed linen and towels are furnished, and Company-employed houseboys maintain the rooms. When a room has two occupants,



*The Company's General Office building*

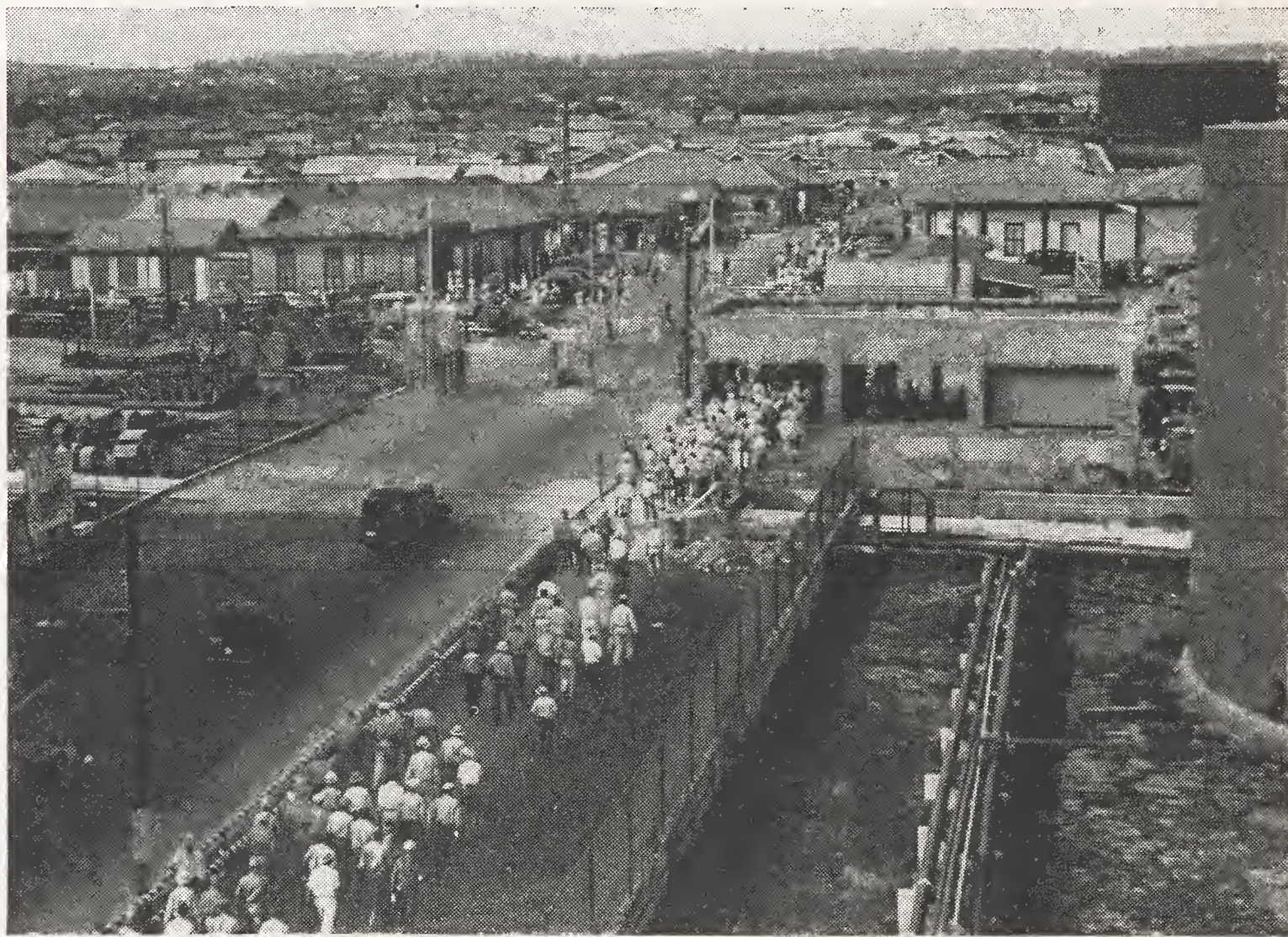
each man currently pays rent of \$10 a month; when sufficient rooms are available to permit single occupancy, the rent is \$15 a month. (These rates are subject to change).

A dormitory provided for unmarried women employees is occupied chiefly by schoolteachers and officeworkers. (A separate dormitory near the Hospital provides quarters for nurses.) Twenty-eight single rooms in pairs are available, with connecting shower-bathroom. The rates in the dormitory are \$15 a month for a single room. A privately owned beauty shop is located in the building.

Dormitory rooms are furnished with bed, vanity with mirror and bench, armchair, writing desk and chair, bed table and bed lamps and rugs. Radios, curtains, pictures, and other items of decoration or utility are furnished by the occupant as desired. The Company supplies (and launders without charge) towels, sheets, pillowcases, and blankets. Dormitory occupants take their meals at the Company Dining Hall.

Over 500 bungalows, from three rooms to six rooms in size, provide housing for employees whose families are in Aruba. Eligibility for this housing depends on position, length of service, and availability of houses.

The bungalows are partially furnished with basic items of furniture. Living rooms include divans, easy chairs, dining table and



*One of the main gates at the entrance to San Nicolas village*

chairs, desk, and large rugs. The bedrooms have dressers, night tables, and twin beds with mattresses. Kitchens are provided with table, stove, electric refrigerator, and cabinets. The householder must provide all other furnishings: dishes and kitchen utensils, lamps, linens, drapes, incidental rugs, radio, and other individual requirements.

The Company operates its own laundry. Collections are made on Saturday mornings, deliveries on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The present charge is about ten cents (U.S. currency) a pound.

The Dining Hall has facilities for serving over 500 persons. All single foreign staff employees eat there, and men working shift are furnished lunches to take on the job. Meals are served boarding house (family) style. The charge for board is adjusted each quarter according to food costs. In the spring of 1946 it was \$48 monthly.

One section of the Dining Hall is set aside as a restaurant, to accommodate Company employees in transit through Aruba, commercial travelers having business with the Company, and others.

All your essential purchases can be made at the Colony Commissary, which is a broadly-stocked general store. You can judge the magnitude of its business, catering to nearly 2,000 residents, from the fact that an average year's sales amount to approximately \$750,000.

Efforts are made to maintain prices on a level with those in the Bayonne-Bayway (New Jersey) area. Purchases are made either by cash (in Curacao currency) or by credit, chargeable monthly to employees' earnings.

Besides food, some of the hundreds of articles sold are toilet articles of all kinds, tobacco, men's haberdashery excluding coats, and a complete line of men's work clothes. Most employees purchase all their clothing in Aruba, either at the Commissary or in stores outside the Company concession. Shirts, trousers, underwear, socks, and shoes are available at the Commissary. Dress clothes, usually white linen or Palm Beach suits, can be purchased in the outside stores. Most office employees wear white linen or cotton trousers to work, while men in the plant usually wear khaki.

Women's or girls' clothing is not stocked in the Commissary, nor is yard goods of any kind. These articles in acceptable variety are for sale in the stores of Oranjestad and San Nicolás, though some employees bring them down from the United States.

Incoming mail is handled by the Company Postoffice, which receives it direct from the Government Postoffice for distribution to employees. You will have a numbered box, and you are urged

to notify regular correspondents of this number in order to facilitate distribution. The correct address is "(Your name and box number) in care of Lago Oil & Transport Co., Ltd., Aruba, N.W.I." The Company Postoffice also sells stamps and mails letters or papers and parcels for employees.

Airmail travels to or from the United States in from four to seven days, depending on distance. Letters sent by regular or "boat" mail take anywhere from ten days to three weeks, depending on shipping connections.

The currency used in Aruba is the Curacao guilder, shown in writing as Florins (Fls.) and having an exchange value of Fls. 1.88 (approx.) to the dollar, making a guilder worth 53 to 54 cents U.S. currency. The cash that employees draw in Aruba for local expenses is paid in guilders.

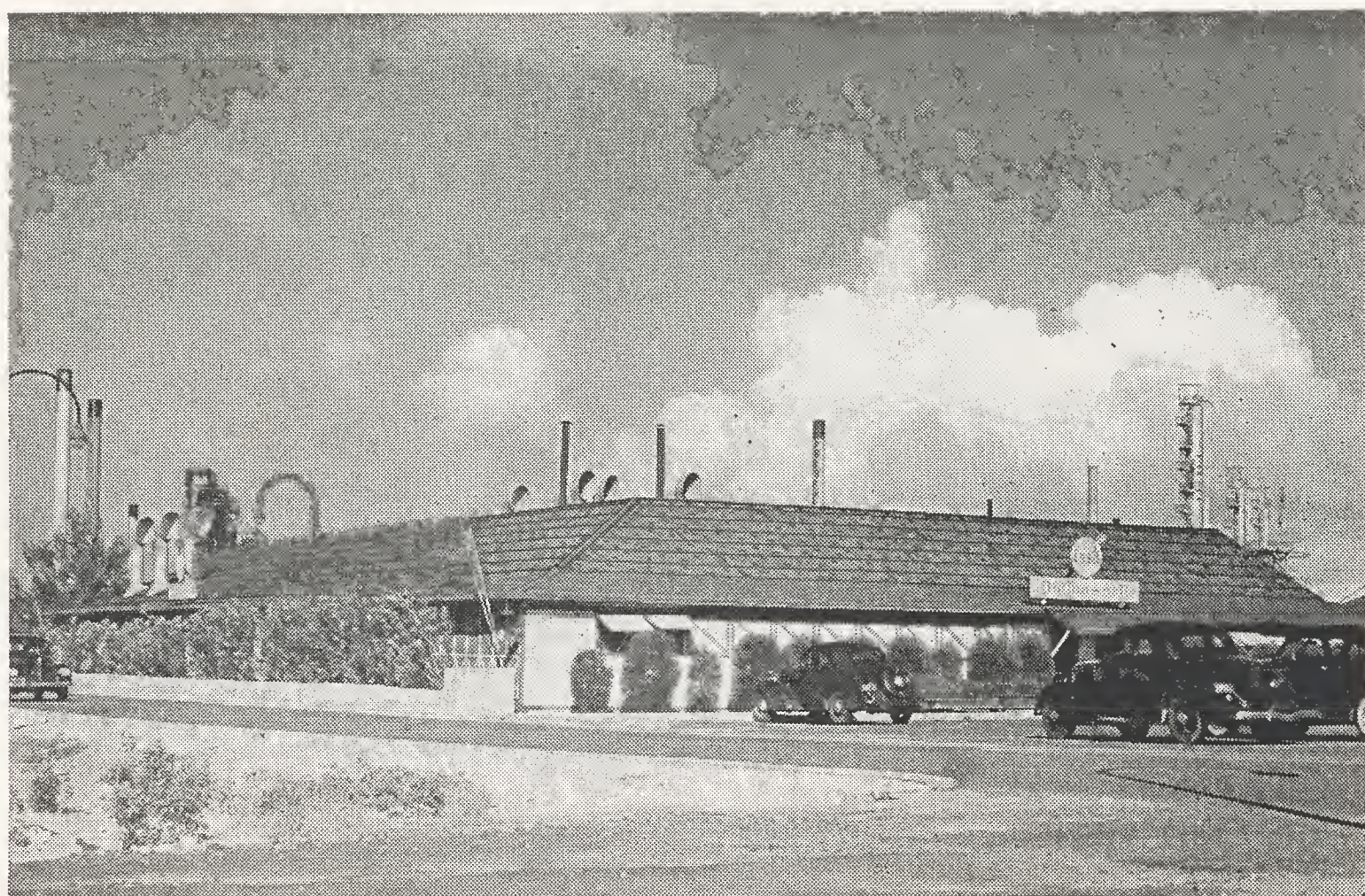
Due to strict currency control in the territory it is advisable to bring only small amounts of U.S. currency to Aruba and that only in denominations less than \$20.

A non-denominational church occupies a place of importance in community life. The church building, of coral and stucco, was built by the Company in 1939, and in 1940 a Hammond electric organ, purchased with money derived from various benefits, was installed. A minister is maintained by the Lago Community Church Association. In addition to regular church services, Sunday School classes



*A view including several of the eight Bachelor Quarters*





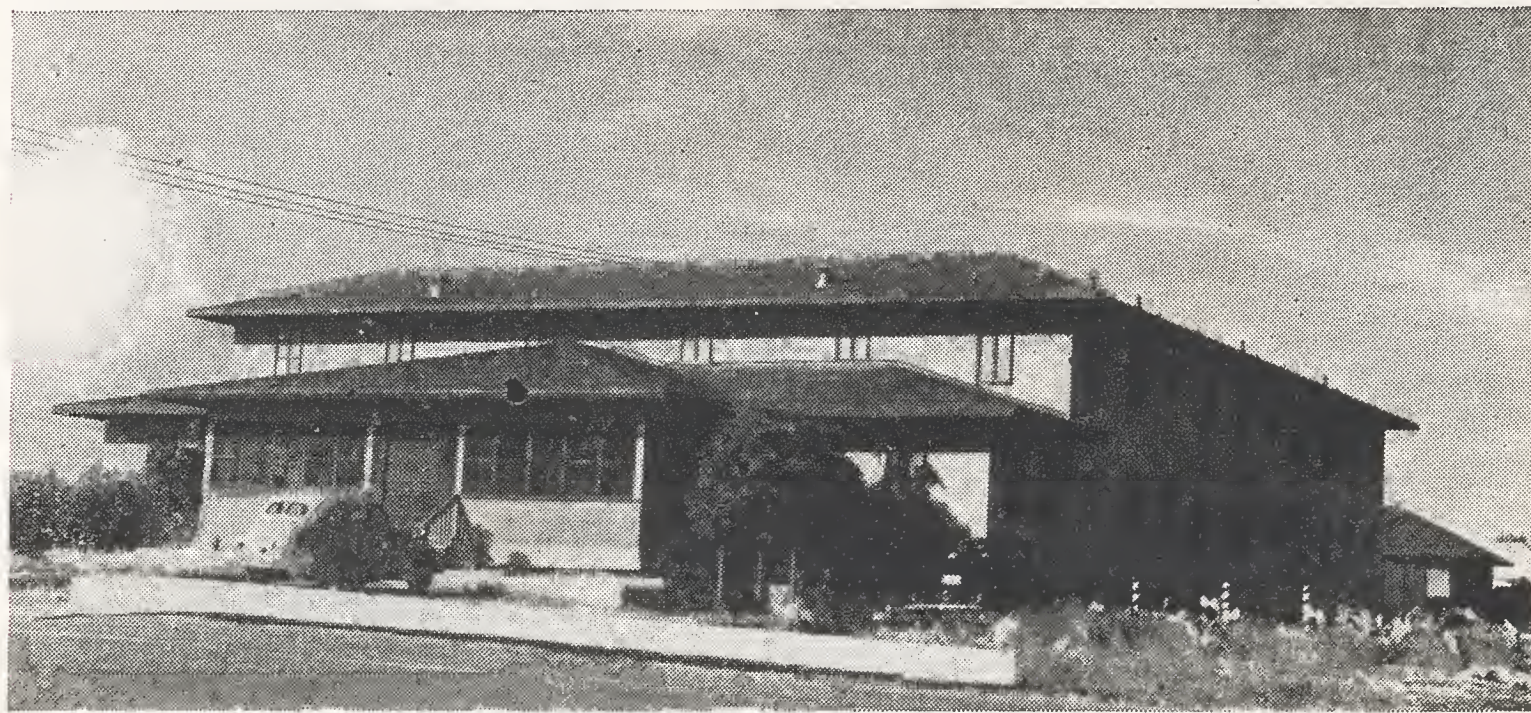
*The Dining Hall*

are held, with church members as teachers, and the Men's Forum and Women's Bible Class meet weekly. An active Women's Guild is affiliated with the Church.

The nearest Catholic church is in San Nicolas, about ten minutes' driving time from the Colony.

### School

The Lago Community School provides formal education for the children of foreign staff employees, ranging from kindergarten through the senior class in high school. The classes are taught by



*The Women's Dormitory*

U.S. teachers who are properly certified in the United States. The school prepares adequately for eventual college entrance, and is recognized by the Southern Association of Colleges of the United States.

A monthly charge, paid by payroll deduction, is made to parents having children in the school.

### You Will Find "Things to Do"

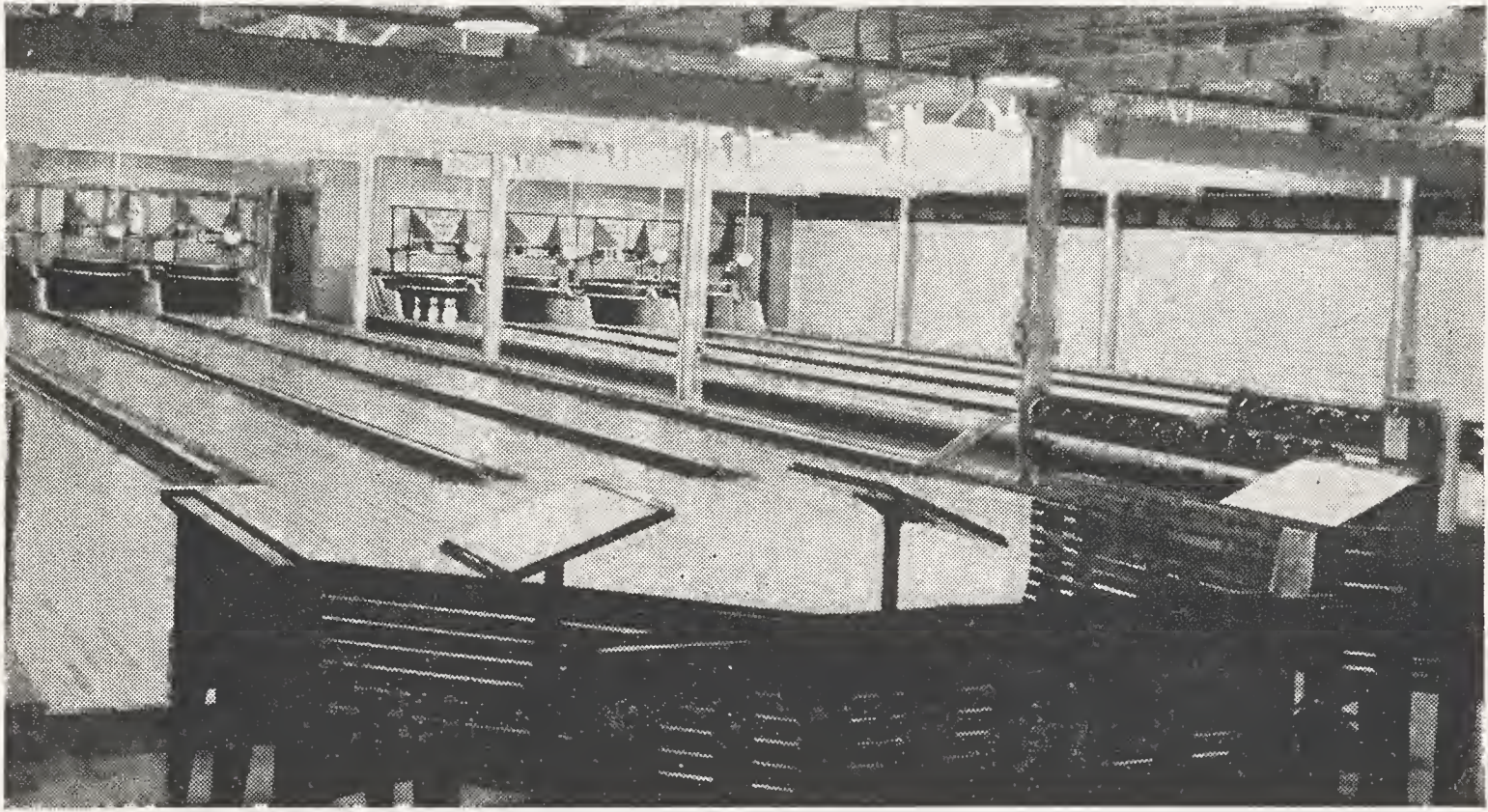
The Esso Club is the community center for foreign staff employees. The original building, constructed late in 1929, was destroyed by fire in June, 1942, and the Club now operates in temporary quarters. These, however, provide most of the essential facilities and, when conditions permit, they will be replaced with a permanent structure.

Motion pictures, presented several times weekly, are one of the chief sources of entertainment. There are frequent dances. The Clubs' rental library contains over 2,000 volumes. (A magazine stand handling several hundred publications is located near the Post-office). There are also a cigar stand, barber shop, soda fountain, card room, bar, lounges, and large automatic phonograph regularly supplied with new records. Frequent card parties, beano parties, and other group entertainments are arranged. All purchases are made with Club coupons, which can be obtained for cash or on credit.

The Club is run by a foreign staff manager in collaboration with a committee elected by the employees which acts as a governing board. Profits are used for additional equipment, expanded services, or maintaining various employee activities, chiefly in connection with sports.

Various organizations active in the Colony include the American Legion, Engineers' Club, Women's Club and Women's Guild, Masonic Order, an active flying club with a private field and numerous planes, and Boy and Girl Scout troops, all sponsored and directed by employees.

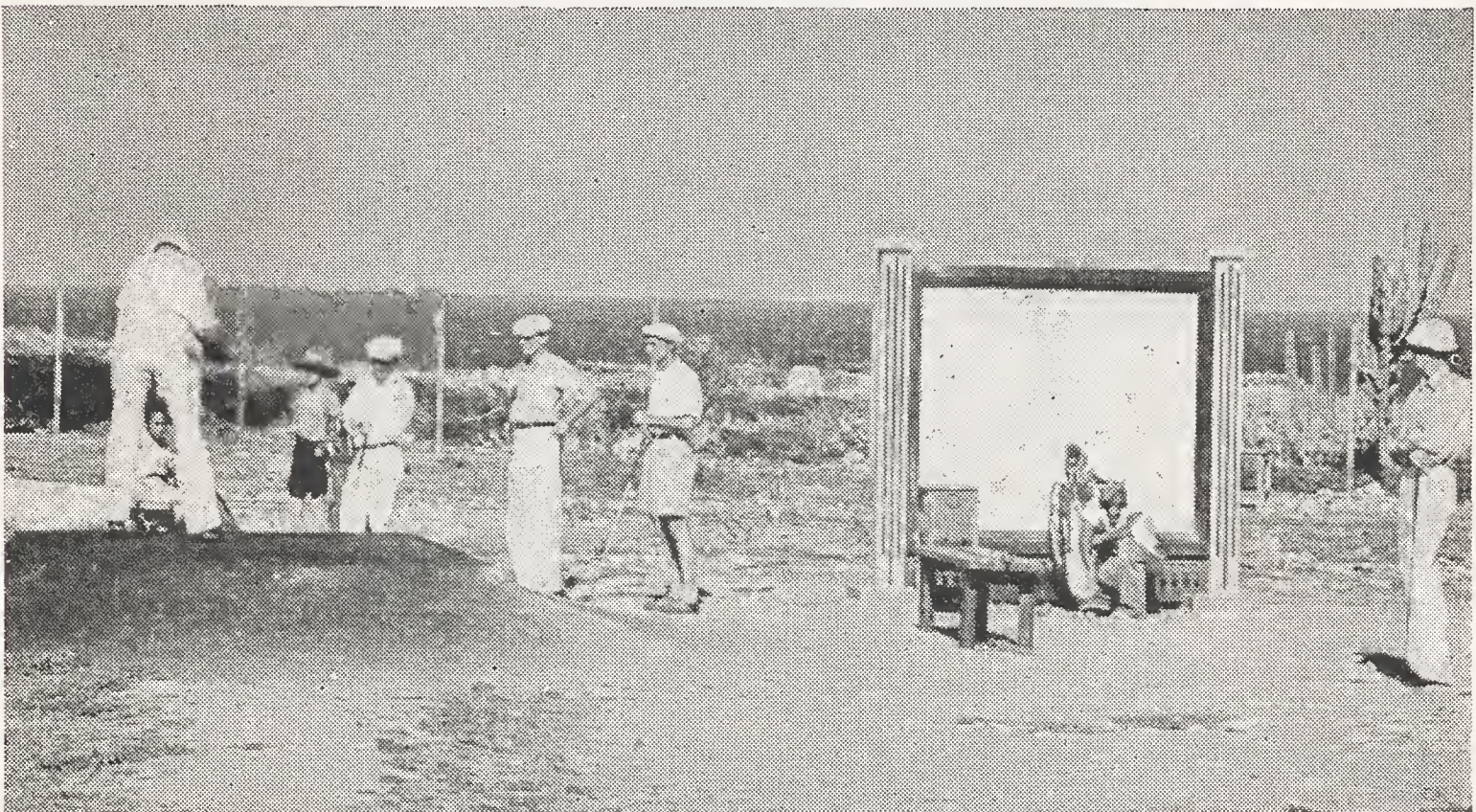
A popular entertainment is bowling, for which eight alleys are provided, and competition is keen in inter-department leagues. Baseball and softball tournaments are held each year. There are four paved tennis courts and two handball courts. A nine-hole golf course, built by the Company, provides year-round golf. It is operated by the Aruba Golf Club, an employees' organization which organizes a dozen tournaments each year. A large clubhouse with bar, lounges, and locker rooms adjoins the course.



*Bowling alleys at the Esso Club*

Swimming is an all-year-round amusement, with the temperature the same in December as in June. There are two sheltered lagoons within walking distance of the Colony, one with diving facilities. Surf-bathing and surf-fishing are to be found within a mile of the Colony, on the north or windward shore of the island where there is no reef. A good road leads to this beach.

The largest of the two lagoons fronting the Colony is also used by the Yacht Club, which holds frequent series of races using



*Sand "greens" on Aruba's excellent course offer a new challenge to the golfer from the States*

"Snipe" class sailboats. Some employees own seaworthy power boats, for fishing outside the reef.

Photography is a popular hobby, though photo-finishing facilities of high quality are not available. The only restriction on subject-matter is that pictures may not be taken within the refinery.

There is no lack of "things to do" in Aruba, and employees find it easy to keep their leisure time filled.

Most employees have radios, which operate on 110 volts, 60 cycle, A.C. current. (The current is "frequency-controlled," permitting the use of electric clocks.) Only short wave or combination long and short wave sets are used, since long-wave reception is undependable. However, the dozen short wave stations now operating in the United States carry practically all of the important programs.

Since radios have been brought into the Colony for many years, secondhand sets are frequently advertised for sale in a local newspaper. Several radio mechanics are available for keeping sets in working condition.

A majority of foreign staff employees operate automobiles. New employees or employees in the States on furlough who wish to take a car to Aruba may request assistance from the Overseas Personnel Office in arranging for the shipment. Second-hand cars, while not plentiful, are usually obtainable in Aruba.

Cars driven outside the Company concession are required to have Government license plates, which cost about \$25 per year. Anyone operating a car outside the concession must also have a Government driver's license, for which the initial charge is Fls. 18, renewable every two years for Fls. 1. The Lago Police Department issues "Esso" license plates without charge for cars operated only within the concession.

## To The Ladies

### *Clothes—General*

The most practical clothing for Aruba is of an *informal, washable type, preferably cottons or rayons*, much the same as is used for resort wear. A limited dry cleaning and pressing service is available, but it is most advisable for new female employees to take along their own electric irons.

There is a cool season when some dark dresses are worn; however, wool clothing (except coats) is infrequently used, and may easily be dispensed with. Lightweight coats and wraps are necessary for evenings, and a raincoat is suggested. Evening dresses are very desirable, both formal and dinner dresses. Since it is windy, hairnets or scarfs are often worn.

It is advisable to take a good supply of shoes, and to make arrangements for obtaining more in your size from the States. Hats are usually worn only for church and special occasions. Two dress shops in Aruba handle women's wear.

### *Special clothing—Nurses*

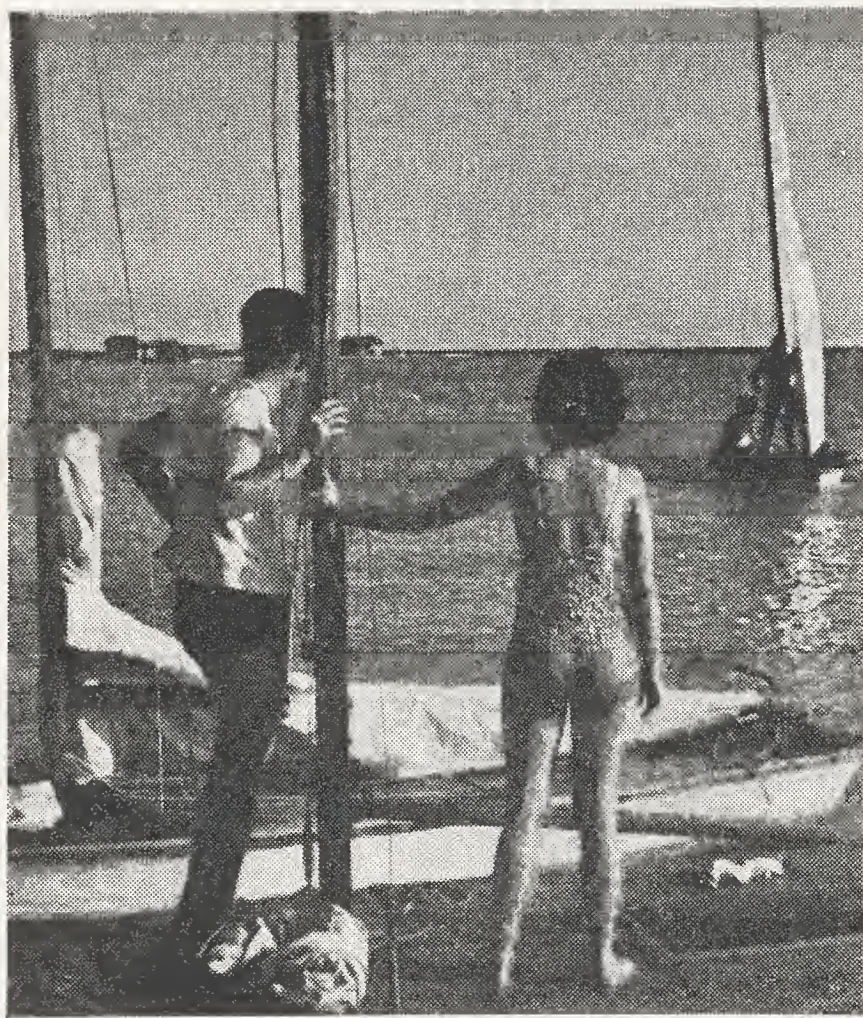
A two-year supply of uniforms, uniform caps, white stockings, and uniform shoes should be taken along. (Uniforms may have short sleeves).

### *Room furnishings*

Most female employees decorate their quarters as bed-living rooms. If this is desired, take two pairs of suitable living room type drapes (2½ yards long for Dormitory, 3 yards long for Nurses' Quarters). You may wish to furnish a couch cover to convert the bed into a studio couch. Walls in the Dormitory are ivory; in Nurses' Quarters, ivory, pink, blue or green (furnishings should harmonize with any of these colors). Room accessories such as lamps, pictures, cushions, ashtrays, etc. are also furnished by the occupant.

### *Miscellaneous*

Several lines of popular cosmetics can be purchased in Aruba. . . A short wave radio is desirable, but not essential. . . Metal articles rust in Aruba; take no more than necessary.



*Water all around, so sailing is popular*



# ARUBA

*In taking a job with a company in the United States, you would need be concerned only with the conditions of your employment, and with general information about the company for which you would work. Whether it were located in Massachusetts, Texas, or California, the communities would be similar in most respects, and would offer a scene and mode of life which would be more or less familiar. In accepting a job with Lago in Aruba, however, it is well also to know something of the small island on which you will live, since going to Aruba involves a radical change in environment.*

## *Island Home*

The island to which you are going is a part of the Netherlands Kingdom. With the exception of an interlude of English rule from 1806 to 1815, the Territory of Curacao, of which Aruba is a part, has been under Netherlands rule for over 300 years. Prior to 1634 these islands were under the domination of Spain.

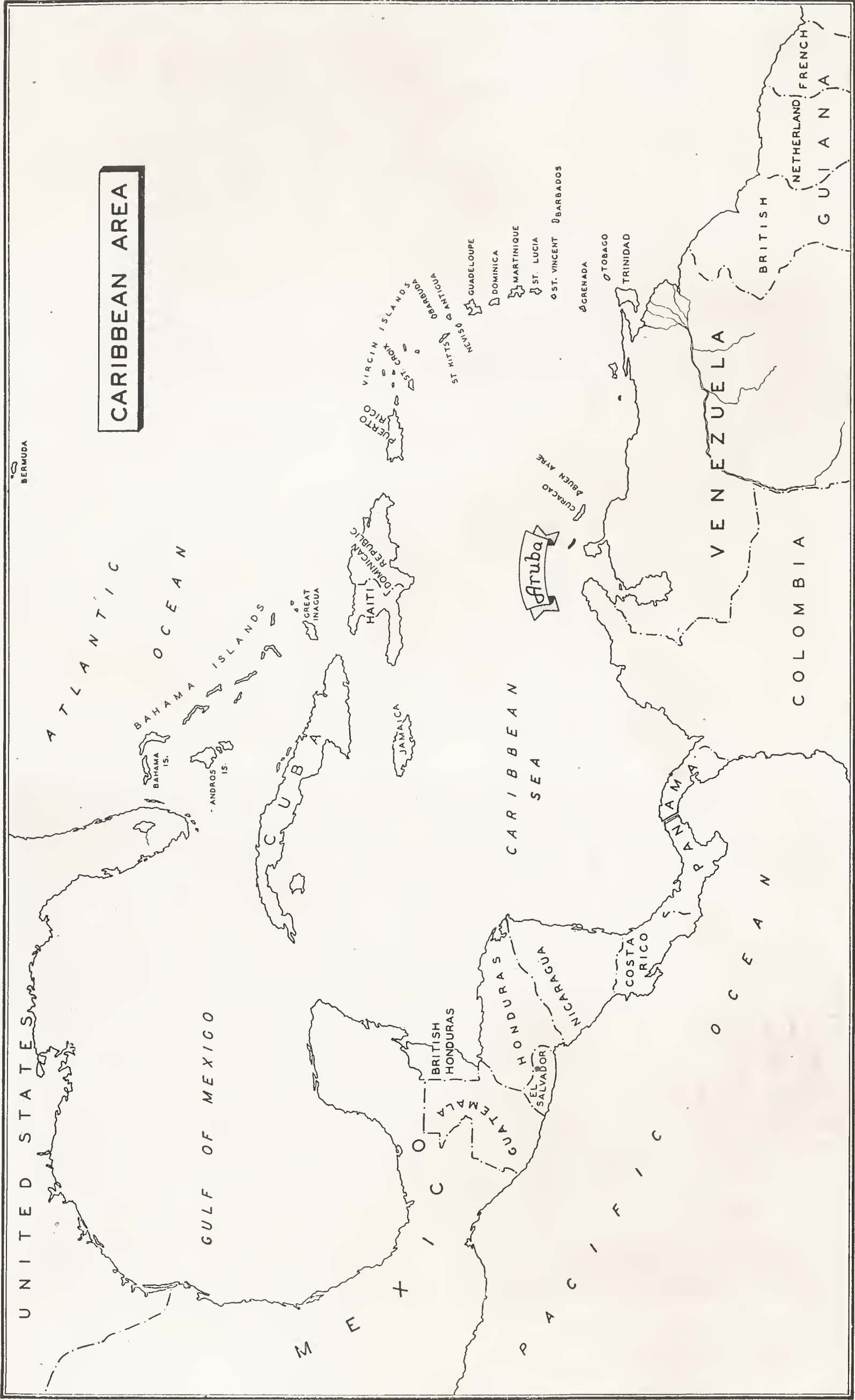
The three islands of Curacao, Aruba, and Bonaire have a language called "Papiamento" which is spoken nowhere else in the world. It is simple in construction and relatively limited in vocabulary. Spanish and Portuguese form its largest part; Dutch is an important ingredient, and in recent decades a limited amount of English has been absorbed. The English language is understood by nearly everyone in Aruba, and is the official language of the refinery.

Aruba, second in importance of the six Netherlands possessions in the West Indies, is located about 20 miles off the northern coast of South America. The closest point on the mainland is a peninsula jutting northward from the coast of Venezuela, which frequently can be seen from Aruba on clear days.

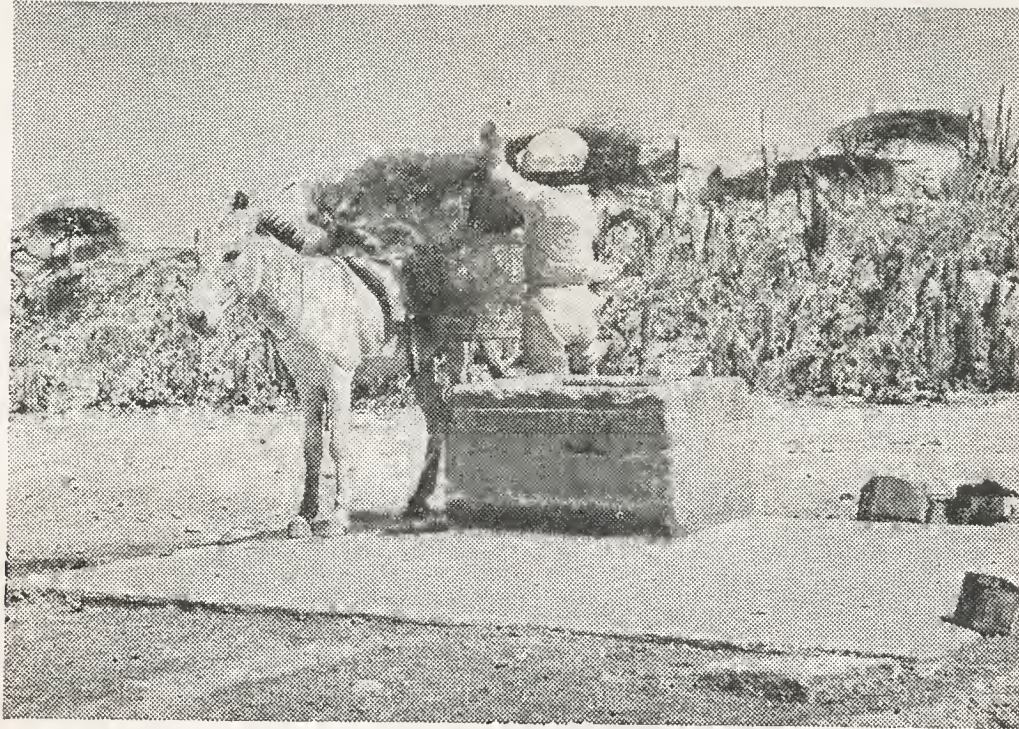
The island, which is approximately 19 miles long and five miles wide, is formed principally of granite, prehistoric volcanic lava, and white coral. The entire length of its leeward side is fringed with reefs, and adding to its tropical appearance (average mean temperature about 85°) are the many palm groves scattered over the west half of the island.

Trade winds blow steadily from the northeast throughout most of the year, and the east end of the island, where the Company's

CARIBBEAN AREA







*Drawing water from one of the government wells*

concession is located, has been largely swept clear of soil, exposing the coral and lava base. Thus aside from the hardy cactus, most of the natural vegetation that survives from one rainy season (October, November, and December) to the next is concentrated in the westward half. Much of the island is more or less flat, and not over 50 to 150 feet above the sea. A range of hills in the north central portion rises to a highest point of 560 feet above sea level. Most of the island is traversed by dirt roads, and a paved highway



*Picnics amid the palms, a favorite diversion on holidays*

connects San Nicolas, adjoining the refinery, with the capital town of Oranjestad, about 14 miles away.

There are shops of many kinds in both San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Most of the goods on sale are of United States origin, with prices relatively higher because of import duties and ocean freight. There are also many stores that sell Central and South American curios and Oriental goods.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, both gold and phosphate mining flourished in Aruba, but there has been no activity in either for over 30 years. Aside from the cultivation of aloes, which provide an important medicinal ingredient of which Aruba produces most of the world's total supply, there are no local industries. A majority of the island's 30,000 inhabitants now depend for their livelihood on the Lago oil refinery, either through direct employment or through providing goods or services.

In the Lago refinery's "pioneering" days, it was customary for foreign staff employees to regard their jobs as "stop-gaps," temporary interludes of one or two periods of employment before returning to the United States. Over the last ten years, however, living and working conditions have become such that many employees have settled down with comparative permanence, and Aruba has become, not merely a place of temporary foreign service, but "home."



*"A tree, its hair loose in  
the never-ending trade  
winds . . ."*



